



Membership 2009-2010

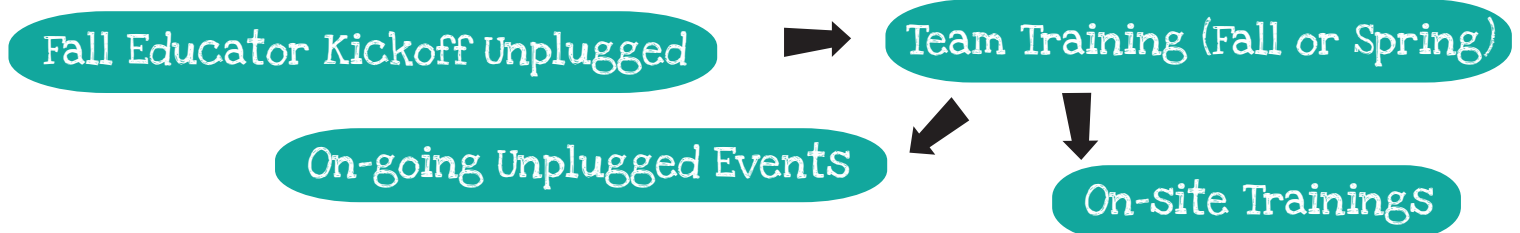
Becoming a Member

InfoSeSSion ➡ MemberShip Form ➡ Payment (NYSSL on FAMIS)

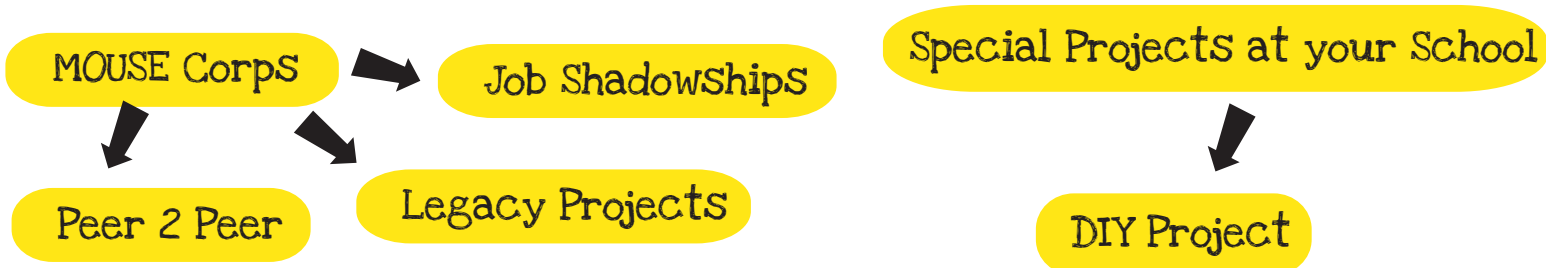
Getting Started at Your School



MOUSE Squad Network Events



Beyond the Helpdesk



mouse squad membership

Thank you for your interest in the MOUSE Squad program!

1. Review this packet for a detailed description of MOUSE and MOUSE's programs and then access your school or organization's readiness for the program.
2. Go to www.mousesquad.org/join to fill out the membership form.
3. Submit your purchase orders for the \$999 Membership fee –
 - **MOUSE Vendor ID:** MOU190
 - **Contract Numbers:** Z115201 (software) or QC510CI (student services)
4. After we have received your form and payment, we will setup your account on mousesquad.org and email to schedule your first orientation visit.



Thank you again and we look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

The MOUSE Program Team

help@mousesquad.org,

212-920-3674 / 212-226-5619 (fax)

MOUSE: Empowering Students to Succeed in Today's Information Society

MOUSE is committed to serving the educational and professional needs of underserved youth, and poised to unlock the potential for these students to be vibrant and valuable members of our communities.

Congressman Charles B. Rangel

About MOUSE

MOUSE is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that creates technology-based opportunities that motivate underserved students to succeed in today's information society. MOUSE's three programs are MOUSE Squad, a student-driven technical support help desk program that addresses the technology needs of elementary, middle and high schools; MOUSECORPS, a youth development program designed to provide leadership and career readiness opportunities for high school students; and TechSource, a research and policy initiative that provides information and leadership around critical education and technology issues facing urban districts with the ultimate goal of increasing the quality and pervasiveness of effective technology usage in public schools. Together, these programs support 21st century learning communities for urban public school students.

MOUSE Squad: Students Making Technology Work

There have been so many pressing issues these past few years that technology and tech problems are often put last on our list of priorities. These students are able to lift us up technologically and help us see the possibilities in our teaching.

Heather Ganek- Benson
Faculty Advisor, M.S. 390



Overview

MOUSE Squad, a national program now in its ninth year of operation, prepares and supports teams of teachers and students to establish and sustain technical support help desks in their schools. *MOUSE Squad* improves a school's capacity to integrate technology into teaching and learning by providing much needed on-site technical support while simultaneously creating a powerful, hands-on 21st century learning experience for students. The core elements of the program include student and teacher computer troubleshooting, database and help desk operations training, a comprehensive standards-based curriculum, and information and communication technology (ICT) career pathway development programs for

participants.

MOUSE Squad has a visible and positive impact on the students and schools it serves in the New York City community and across the country. In FY08, MOUSE operated in 162 sites (schools and CBOs) schools across the country—67 schools in New York City, 48 schools in Chicago, and 47 sites in Northern California. *MOUSE Squad* supports 21st century skills development for over 1,600 students that participate in the program, while simultaneously providing critically needed, on-site technology support services for over 113,000 students and 8,000 teachers and administrators. These schools saved over \$3 million in technology support costs. MOUSE programs are targeted to underserved youth and 77% of students at MOUSE schools are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Approximately one-third of MOUSE participants are young women. In addition to its U.S. programs, MOUSE is working in partnership with several organizations, including Microsoft and One Laptop Per Child, to support the effective use of educational technology around the world.

MOUSE Corps: Tomorrow's Technology Leaders

Overview

MOUSE Corps is a youth development program designed to support the growth of leadership and career readiness for students through opportunities that include advanced training, Peer-to-Peer Mentoring, Job Shadowships, College/Career workshops, Conference presentations, Field Trips, Experiential Learning Projects (ELP), and paid Summer Internships. The program opens corporate doors to participating students by connecting them with mentors in the profit sector at Fortune 500 companies. As *MOUSE Corps* members, students participate in workshops and activities that are designed to build self-esteem; and develop leadership, communication, technology and academic and career- readiness skills.



above: *MOUSE Corps* student at his Citibank Job Shadowship.

MOUSE Students Do Better in School!

Fordham University's evaluation show that there is a statistically significant difference between *MOUSE Squad* Participants and non-participants. Results show:

- ❖ *MOUSE Squad* participants are more likely to attend school and do better on reading tests than non-participants.
- ❖ *MOUSE Squad* helps improve the academic performance of participants, given that there's a strong connection between attendance and academic performance.

This investigation of *MOUSE Squad* has also uncovered exciting links between the program and participating students' development of 21st century skills, positive identity, and relationship formation. This impact was even more significant for schools and students that were at a greater economic disadvantage, and for African American and Hispanic members of the program. Other *MOUSE* highlights from self-reported data include:

MOUSE Programs Provides Leadership Skills: 100% of *MOUSE Squad* students surveyed report that the *MOUSE Squad* program has helped them: learn to focus their attention; problem-solve; set goals; find information; and, manage their time—all crucial 21st century skills.

MOUSE Programs Provide Technology and Academic Skills:

- 98% percent of students report that the program has helped improve their computing and communication skills, and increased their desire to stay in school.
- 92% of students said they believe the program has helped them improve academic skills (reading, writing, math, etc.). *MOUSE Squad* faculty advisors indicate that the program teaches organization (100%), problem solving (99%) and communication skills (96%).

MOUSE Programs Support Schools and Communities: 99% of *MOUSE Squad* faculty advisors reported believing the program has improved their students' attendance and 96% said *MOUSE Squad* had opened up career and job possibilities for their students.

mouse tales: MOUSE Squad Alumni

From MOUSE Squad to Technology Consulting Entrepreneur



"Participating in the MOUSE Squad gave me a true sense of purpose. I never could have imagined in just 8 years, I would be CEO of my own technology consulting firm and training the next generation of MOUSE Squads"

Juan Garzon, MOUSE Squad Alumni

Similar to many high school students, Juan spent much of his first two years at Robert F. Wagner Jr. Secondary School for Arts & Technology motivated by what he saw on television and dreaming of being the next Michael Jordan.

In Fall 2000, Robert F. Wagner introduced the MOUSE Squad program. As one of this program's first students, Juan participated in the training program, then installed new computers, setup their wireless network and provided technical support for the faculty and students. In his words, *"MOUSE taught me, not just about computer repair, but about team work and leadership."*

Participating in MOUSE provided a window to a professional field where he could excel and look forward to building a successful career. With his MOUSE Squad experience, Juan was selected for a summer internship at SONY/Columbia Records and to shadow a Technology Support Representative at Solomon Smith Barney.

After one year of being in the MOUSE Squad program, Juan was honored as a MOUSE Champion of Technology and Education. In a room of 500 technology professionals, Juan was presented with this award and gave his first public speech. *"The confidence to go up to the podium and speak to people who I had never met, and speak my mind for the first time came from my experiences with MOUSE."* That day, Juan made a promise to start his own company and provide support to MOUSE in any way possible.

In 2002, Robert F. Wagner High School named Juan the "Leader in Technology" for his graduating class. After graduation, Juan attended the College of Plattsburgh State University, majoring in Computer Science. With four years of quietly learning, researching and planning, Juan graduated May 2006. Rather than waiting to pursue his dream, two weeks after graduation, Juan registered his company Zong Services, Inc. and started with \$20 in his business bank account. Juan's company provides technology consulting services and exceptional customer support.

When Juan returned to his High School, he found that his faculty advisor and principal had since left, as had the MOUSE Squad program. Knowing firsthand the significance and impact of this program, Juan convinced the new administration to restart the MOUSE Squad program and offered to volunteer his support on a weekly basis.

Juan has used his passion for technology as motivation to discover his natural leadership skills and define himself as a valuable member of his community. Juan's relationship with MOUSE has now come full circle, as his company recently signed his first contract -- not coincidentally, his first contract is with MOUSE with Juan teaching the next generation of MOUSE Squads.

mouse tales: MOUSE Squad School

MOUSE Squad Enlightens Students at Thomas A. Edison High



"MOUSE Squad is a great program in which you not only learn computer skills, but also life skills. It teaches you how to cooperate as a team and to provide quality customer service to the entire school community."

Karen Canales, MOUSE Squad Student

With over 2,000 students, Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical High School in Queens strives to develop the leaders of tomorrow by preparing students for the academic, technical, civic and workforce challenges of the 21st century. Recognized as **MOUSE Squad of the Year** for 2006 and 2007, the Thomas Edison MOUSE Squad students

provide outstanding leadership and technical knowledge in their community.

In 2003, faculty advisors Alex Bell and Moses Ojeda introduced the MOUSE Squad program to students at Thomas Edison High. *"We were looking to enhance our technology program and to improve our students' leadership, interpersonal and customer relationship skills that will help them to be more successful in the future,"* says Moses Ojeda.

One of the first projects for the Thomas Edison MOUSE Squad was assembling the computer network for the NY Department of Education High School Admission Center. Using skills they learned in their training, the MOUSE Squad students completed the installation ahead of schedule and also provided staff training and help desk support.

Through a program called Virtual Enterprise, the Thomas Edison MOUSE Squad has extended its reach to several other schools, including Martin Luther King High School in Manhattan and Beach Channel High School in Queens. Virtual Enterprise is a unique program teaching students about business and running their own company. MOUSE Squad students expertly setup the technology required to create the simulated business environment for Virtual Enterprise.

With their extensive experience, the Thomas Edison MOUSE Squad has produced a series of instructional videos, including "How to Create Ethernet Cables" and "How to Configure an Internet Connection through a Network Server." These videos were very positively received and are now included with the materials sent to MOUSE Squads across the country. The MOUSE Squad students have provided exceptional technical support for national conferences, including NECC and Thirteen Celebration of Teaching and Learning.

Several exciting projects are underway for the MOUSE Squad at Thomas Edison, including supporting the use of SMART Boards in the classroom, redesign of the school website and offering workshops to help teachers better use technology to enhance learning.

Thomas Edison MOUSE Squad students are known for their technical expertise, dependability and professionalism. According to Anthony Barbetta, Principal, "MOUSE Squad has provided invaluable assistance to our school and made technology easy for our entire staff. MOUSE Squad students have improved academic performance and higher attendance rates than the school average. Those on MOUSE Squad are surrounded by students who are successful inside and outside the classroom."

FAQ: Starting a MOUSE Squad

? How important is MOUSESquad.org to the operation and growth of a successful Squad?

Answer: Extremely important! MOUSESquad.org is a critical aspect of our programs' learning environment. The site embraces the theoretical model of Computer Supported Collaborative Learning, and is a hub for essential Squad activity that includes: accessing Certification Module Activities; communicating with fellow Squad Members and Coordinators around specific cases and projects; demonstrating learning and discovery; and reflecting on program participation and on-the-job experience. Plus, MOUSESquad.org serves not only to connect Members and Coordinators within a Squad, but to connect Squads nationally, share experience and expertise, and contribute to the broader network.



? What kinds of training services does MOUSE provide for my Squad Members and myself?

Answer: Each year, MOUSE plans a robust calendar of NETWORK and TRAINING events to supplement your training and activities on site. It's important to note that, ultimately, MOUSE Squad Coordinators are responsible for the facilitation of training and special projects for their Squad. MOUSE-led events typically aim to establish, enhance, and grow your Squad, while individual Module Certification Activities and projects are the responsibility of each Squad Coordinator. Below is a list of the categories of events you can expect to have access to as a MOUSE Squad site.

- **TEAM TRAININGS:** MOUSE provides region-wide full day Team Trainings in the fall and spring as an opportunity for students and educators to participate as a team in hands-on training sessions focused on leadership, team building and help desk skills. Using a few of the activities in the MOUSE Squad Certification modules online, squads rotate through four classes: Hardware, Networking, MOUSE Squad Operations & Leadership.
- **"UNPLUGGED" SQUAD EVENTS:** Through partnerships with local organizations, businesses and educational institutions, MOUSE NYC offers several MOUSE Squad "Unplugged" events. These trips are opportunities to connect Squads' skill and enthusiasm to topics beyond the help desk, including Robotics, Multimedia and Game Design.
- **EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** MOUSE brings professionals from the fields of design, computing, and information technology to local venues to cover critical topics in the landscape of education, computing and technology.
- **ONSITE TRAINING:** If you are unable to attend our central trainings and would like additional training in specific Certification-related topics or Squad operations and support, we invite you to submit a request for onsite training! Our Field Support Representative will be happy to schedule a training for you and/or your squad at your site.

? How time consuming is the MOUSE Squad program for the Coordinators involved?

Answer: A MOUSE Squad Coordinator should plan to commit between 6 and 8 hours per week to a prospective MOUSE Squad. Like anything worth doing, the MOUSE Squad Program is a classic case of "the more you put into it, the more you get out." Getting started may take a bit of extra effort, but typical Squads spend about 6-8 hours split between Certification Module Activities, help desk operations, and special projects per week.



Is the MOUSE Squad just a help desk?

Answer: No, the MOUSE Squad help desk is a foundation from which students and educators grow a committed team. There's no understating how important the help desk is in situating the activities of your MOUSE Squad program but, as so many educators and youth development professionals have proven, the possibilities for how a Squad can grow over time are limited only by the amount of support on site, and the amount of time Coordinators and Squad Members can commit. In New York alone, so many innovative educators have turned their Squads into great examples of focused learner networks where tech skills drive broader passions. MOUSE programming is designed to fit the context of your site and the interests of your learners. Build your Squads "specializations" in areas like Robotics, Gaming and Game Design, Video and Photography, Green Computing, or other projects that fit with existing school or program culture like A/V and Yearbook.



What is MOUSE Corps, and is this part of MOUSE Squad?

Answer: We're glad you asked. MOUSE Corps is a critical part of the trajectory of every MOUSE Squad. Think of it like the Eagle Scouts, an advanced cadre of learners committed to continuing to pursue and apply skills to their broader communities and the context of work and life. MOUSE Corps started as a high school program that engaged experienced MOUSE Squad technicians in their transition from high school to work and higher education. Now, after three years of operation, the MOUSE Corps has deepened its roots and grown substantially. Still an advanced group of skilled, tech-savvy students, the Corps supports students in growing their enthusiasm for tech-related fields of work and study through Job Shadowships, focused Design Projects, Mentoring, Paid Internships, and access to a network of highly engaged and motivated peers. MOUSE Corps is the ultimate achievement for Squad Members who want to continue developing the knowledge and skills cultivated over the course of their involvement with the program.



Does the level and quality of technology infrastructure and use in my school or site matter to the success of MOUSE quad?

Answer: No. MOUSE Squads operate in many different technology environments!

If your school or program site has a less-than-ideal technology environment:

Start small. It will help to inform teachers who have broken computers and other digital devices that the MOUSE Squad Help Desk can be a great aid in keeping the few available resources in your school up and running. But remember, MOUSE Squads can be deployed to work on all kinds of projects: use your Squad to help run the yearbook; get involved with coordinating broader Audio/Visual activities in the school; or serve as a team of gurus to help teachers who want to infuse content with tech-based projects. Hopefully, with the help of your MOUSE Squad, acquiring and supporting more computers and devices will also become a possibility, and your school will be able to more seamlessly integrate technology into its culture, curriculum, and activities. In addition, to help increase teacher comfort with technology, your squad might consider offering workshops on areas of need for the school community such as basic computer operation, search optimization, and email use.

If your school is very computer/Internet savvy and has a lot of accessible technology:

Your MOUSE Squad students will have their work cut out for them! A smaller squad might find supporting large or complicated networks and systems challenging, so a larger squad of more than 8 students might be helpful. It will help to widely advertise your squad's services, notify all teachers and employees at school of the ticket tracking system, and keep your ticket documentation up-to-date. Again, beyond a Squad's daily help desk management, consider deploying them to designing workshops focusing on other areas of need for the school or local community doing upgrades, network projects, community service, or create design workshops and put your Squad's tech savvy to work on broader challenges in the context of school, home, and community.



Does it matter if my school or program site has someone already in charge of technology support or not?

Answer: If the supports are right, it works both ways!

If there is no one in charge of technology support:

The MOUSE Squad will need at least one Squad Coordinator to work on establishing the scope of the squad's work, negotiating the appropriate level of access to technology systems for the squad, and establishing a protocol for prioritizing ticket requests and projects. The MOUSE Squad Coordinator is required to participate in training that will prepare her/him to implement the MOUSE Squad. This training aims to ensure adequate preparation for establishing a culture, selecting and managing a team of students, and communicating the goals of your Squad.

If an educator (or other adult) is already the technology coordinator or technician:

Support from the site's technology coordinator and/or technician can be a major asset. The key is to start the relationship early. When MOUSE Squad Coordinators reach out to a site's tech professionals from the beginning, higher rates of success occur. Work with him/her to determine the scope of the Squad's work, to negotiate the appropriate level of access to technology systems for the Squad, and to establish a protocol for prioritizing ticket requests and other projects.

How important is the MOUSE Squad Coordinator's personal understanding & mastery of computer repair and troubleshooting?

Answer: Access to "Techies" is a great advantage, but understanding a lot about technology is not absolutely necessary to begin the program. Luckily, MOUSE offers opportunities for educators to learn alongside their students - improving basic skills and offering professional development in special interest areas related to instruction and technology. The MOUSE Squad Coordinator's key to success is planning - putting serious thought into hours of operation, Squad member selection, ticket tracking/management and effectively communicating the role of MOUSE Squad to the faculty and students it serves. New Mouse Squad Coordinators are highly encouraged to participate in Squad Essentials Trainings that will prepare them to implement MOUSE Squad. On-site Technical Skills Trainings are also available to New York sites through our Field Support Representative (by request and appointment) throughout the year.

How many student Members do I need to form a Squad, and do they need prior experience?

Answer: The size and experience level of your squad can (and should) vary. Understanding a lot about technology is not absolutely necessary to begin the program (although MOUSE encourages all participants to improve their skills) but a positive attitude and willingness to learn is. Getting a Squad up and running, no matter the size and level of experience Squad members have, is a good first step in improving the existing technical support in your school. Eventually, you will want to recruit a squad of students of manageable size, with enough Squad Members to handle the number of ticket requests and required maintenance or special projects that you envision. This will vary from site to site.

It is important to vary the ages, experience levels, and learner types of a Squad to provide depth as well as the opportunity for student mentoring and collaborative learning. In addition, several sites have found added success by providing student incentives for the services they provide through MOUSE Squad. Service credit points, prizes, or even hourly pay can help recruit squad members and motivate them to do their best in certain cases.

If the school has or had a successful student tech support team (formal or informal):

Work to integrate MOUSE Squad into the youth technical support that is already present in the school. Recruit students who have experience to help teach new technicians, work with other advisors to determine the scope of the squad's work, negotiate the appropriate level of access to technology systems for the squad, and establish a protocol for prioritizing and sharing ticket requests.

How important is it for the MOUSE Squad to receive support for the program from school staff and administrators?

Answer: ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL!

Enthusiasm to run a MOUSE Squad is only the first step. Your Squad will need the active support of a dedicated Squad Coordinator, school or site administrators, custodians, and technology support staff (to name only the most critical) to ensure your MOUSE Squad's success. In ideal cases, Coordinators have gone the extra step of creating buy-in from parents and even community stakeholders. Before getting started, Prospective Sites should all take an inventory of the supports and resources available to their potential Squad. If your leadership team determines that the program is the right fit, it will be helpful to hold a meeting for your site's staff to highlight the benefits of the MOUSE Squad program and to explain how the Squad can be integrated into the culture of the school, CBO, or institution where the program is being implemented.



Can we still run a MOUSE Squad if our school's or program site's schedule is packed tight with too many other activities and classes?

Answer: If this is the case, you're probably not considering adding another program to your already harried program offerings. Just in case, MOUSE recommends that all MOUSE Squad students' schedules be able to accommodate regular meetings, either before or after school, or during the school day.



How important is it for the Coordinator and students to attend MOUSE Squad trainings?

Answer: Training is a key part of MOUSE's program culture. It serves not only as a way to build new skills, but helps to connect you and your Squad to the greater network of MOUSE Squads in your area. All MOUSE trainings are hands-on and help you to integrate technology and learning in engaging ways. New Coordinators are highly encouraged to participate in at least one Essentials Training that will prepare them to implement MOUSE Squad. MOUSE is committed to constantly improving and updating its training calendar - Squads should check the program calendar on MOUSEsquad.org regularly to find out when new trainings and events are being offered.



How much does it cost to join MOUSE Squad?

Answer: All schools are required to pay a \$999 Membership fee. The yearly MOUSE Squad membership fee is paid on FAMIS, using your school's NYSSL software budget – or using our new Student Services Contract. This fee helps defray some of MOUSE's costs in support of our mission to work with underserved students. We will be in touch in the fall to finalize payment.

So you wanna start a MOUSE Squad...

Every new MOUSE Squad expands our program network. And like any network, ours is only as strong as each of its parts. MOUSE programming starts with a solid foundation on-site, and after years of implementation, we know there are key characteristics that will start you on the right course. Remember, our mission depends on your success. To consider your site "ready" for implementation, compare it with the inventory below. The items on this list should help guide you in determining whether your program site is ready to get started.

Successful programs start with committed MOUSE Squad Coordinators

Your MOUSE Squad Coordinator...

- ☐ Recognizes that MOUSE Squad is a youth development program first, and that creating a successful level-one tech-support solution for schools and sites depends entirely on creating safe, engaging, collaborative, and creative learning environments for the students and educators involved.
- ☐ Is excited to take their students' interest in technology to the next level.
- ☐ Can devote around 6 - 8 hours each week to the MOUSE Squad help desk & student technician certification.
- ☐ Will help students become MOUSE Squad certified technicians by facilitating the activities, reflections and assessments available on mousesquad.org.
- ☐ Is able to attend trainings at MOUSE.
- ☐ Is able to organize student trips to trainings and events.
- ☐ Is also the Tech Coordinator at your school/organization or is committed to establishing relationships with Tech staff.
- ☐ Has the support of at least 1 other staff member to serve as a back-up MOUSE Squad Coordinator.

Squads thrive at schools and program sites where all staff are committed to its success and see the program as part of its fabric.

Your School or Program Site...

- ☐ Is willing to provide MOUSE Squad Technicians and Coordinators with adequate resources, privileges and time to make MOUSE Squad a success.
- ☐ Will allow students to troubleshoot and resolve technology issues.
- ☐ Allows students to have access to email from school computers, and will not block essential MOUSE Squad websites.
- ☐ Is able to pay the \$999 Yearly Membership fee.
- ☐ Will provide a "Base of Operations" for your MOUSE Squad to organize their help desk tickets, have meetings, and complete certification.
- ☐ Will help support the Squad by engaging student technicians as experts, and use the processes of the Squad to submit ticket requests, assign special projects, and help to support Coordinators in carrying out the objectives of the program at your site.

MOUSE Squad Tools

My Certification

What is MOUSE Squad Certification?

At MOUSE, we believe expertise comes from experience, and your MOUSE Squad Certification is an important first step in building the tools you'll need to be successful as a Squad Member. Our 10 project-based instructional Modules are a comprehensive, standards-based, online curriculum that facilitates the training of student technicians in computer troubleshooting, help desk operations and customer service skills.



Certification Homepage

Go to the My Certification homepage (<http://www.mousesquad.org/certification>). From each Module's "Home" or landing page, students and Coordinators have quick access to Module Outcomes, standards alignment, a menu of Module activities and projects, a Module quiz and the all new BlogIt feature (more below).

Activities & Plans

Within each Activity in a Module, both coordinators and students move easily from the "Plan" view to the "Activity" view and connect dynamically to the mousesquad.org Toolbox to participate and demonstrate learning over time. Often, activity pages will include links to reference materials in the Knowledge Base or "KBase" section of the site.

Certification Results

From within your Squad Homepage, all Coordinators are able to access each student's Quiz results (Passed, Failed or In Progress) and Technical Skills Tracker responses by clicking the "Certification Results" link in the toolbox on the left sidebar. This will help you keep track of each student's progress through certification.

BlogIt! & Squad Blogs

What is Blog It?

All registered Squad Members have access to a Blogging Feature on mousesquad.org. Within Certification, students will Blog answers to module-related questions through the BlogIt icon at the bottom of each Module Home Page. New Certification enables students to respond to specific reflection questions during their work on a Module. Some Squads might use the BlogIt feature of a module as the last activity they work on. Others might reflect as they go.



How do I create a Blog post?

There are several ways to access the blogging feature.

- **Through My Certification:** After logging in, go to <http://www.mousesquad.org/certification>. You can then select a Module and click the "Blog It!" button next to it to answer the questions related to that module.
- **Through Your Squad Homepage:** Choose "Create Blog post" from the toolbox on the right sidebar of the Squad Homepage: <http://www.mousesquad.org/squad/my-squad-name>

Private Posts vs. Squad Posts vs. Public Posts

Before you submit your post, you are asked to choose who has permission to view your post.

- **Private Post:** Only you and your coordinators can access a private post, they are displayed (for coordinators only) in your Squad's Blog, from the Squad Homepage
- **Squad-only Post:** This post will be viewable by everyone who is a member of your squad. They are also displayed in your Squad's Blog.
- **Public Post:** Every registered user on mousesquad.org will have access to public posts.

Squads Blog: All Public Posts

You can browse all public posts from MOUSE Squads across the globe in the "Squad Blogs" area (from the top menu of the site): http://www.mousesquad.org/mouse_squad_blog

Squad Homepage

What is the Squad Homepage?

Your Squad Homepage is the hub of your school's MOUSE Squad operations and communications. From here, you can:

- Create Squad Posts for your team,
- Publicize your Squad by adding a photo, goals, skills, location and meeting time,
- Manage your MOUSE Squad student roster,
- Manage help desk cases and special projects using CaseTracker,
- Read and respond to student Blog posts in your Squad Blog,
- Track each students' quiz scores in Certification Results,
- Collect help desk tickets digitally from anyone at your school, using your own public URL:
<http://www.mousesquad.org/squad/my-squad-name>.

How can I add my MOUSE Squad to mousesquad.org?

After registering, Coordinator users are given access to Create a "New MOUSE Squad" on mousesquad.org (from the left-sidebar toolbox). You will be asked to select your school or organization from a list of all member schools, create an easily-identifiable name for your squad, and give your squad a tagline and a description. After adding the MOUSE Squad to the system, your students will be able to request membership to your Squad from the Squad directory.

What are Squad Posts?

A Squad Post is an announcement or message to your squad that will appear on the Squad Homepage, and get emailed to everyone in your squad. By default, only coordinator users and other squad members who have been given the "manager" role for your Squad have access to create Squad Posts.

How do students join my MOUSE Squad?

All students must first create their student account on mousesquad.org (from the homepage www.mousesquad.org) before they will be able to join your MOUSE Squad. After they have their own username and password, they can join in one of 2 ways:

- **Squad Directory:** Log in and go to <http://www.mousesquad.org/og> to access the Squad Directory. Search the list for your MOUSE Squad name and click the "Request Membership" link. The coordinator who created the MOUSE Squad will then receive an email notification. Follow the link in the email to your Squad's Members area to approve or deny their request.
- **Add their usernames directly to your squad:** Go to your Squad's Members area (from the toolbox in the left sidebar of your Squad Homepage). Select the "Add Members" tab and type in the student's new username. NOTE: you can not add them if they do not already have accounts on mousesquad.org

Managing Members and Configuring Member Roles

By default, both students & coordinators who join your Squad have access to the following Squad Homepage features:

- Create a Case and Edit a Case
- Create a Blog post
- Comment on a Blog post
- Comment on a Squad post

By default, only Coordinators have access to these **manager-only features**:

- Create a Squad post
- Create a CaseTracker Project
- View Certification Results
- Edit your Squad Homepage
- Edit your School's information
- Approve and Deny membership requests
- Remove members

Can I give a student the same level of access that I have?

Yes! If you have a student Team Leader in your squad that you would like to be able to manage your squad - Go to your Squad's Members area (from the toolbox in the left sidebar of your Squad Homepage) and choose the "Configure Member Roles" tab. Find the student's username and check the "MOUSE Squad Manager" box under their name. Click "Save Changes" at the bottom of the page.

Personalize & Advertise your Squad Homepage

Your Squad's name, description, location and "About Us" section are all viewable by the public through your public URL: <http://www.mousesquad.org/squad/my-squad-name>. Brainstorming and personalizing these sections is a great team-building activity for squads. Your squad can use the space as a chance to tell others, at your school and in the entire MOUSE Squad network, about your squads special skills, about the types of work your squad does, about your goals for the year and you can add a photo! To edit, the coordinator must be on the homepage - above your Squad's name click the "edit" tab.

After you have personalized this page, send your homepage to faculty and administrators at your school to advertise your MOUSE Squad and to make it easier for them to submit their own trouble tickets to your squad through CaseTracker. (More on CaseTracker below).

CaseTracker

Printer is not working

Posted on November 11th, 2008 by **Mister G**

Case # 5579-7904

Priority: 3 Assigned: **Mister** Status: Open

The printer smells like coconuts.

Project: General

Opened on: Tue, November 11, 2008 - 6:50pm

Last modified: Tue, November 11, 2008 - 6:50pm

Opened by: Mister G

Type: Printer

Submitted by: smellypants@yahoo.com

Location:

What is CaseTracker?

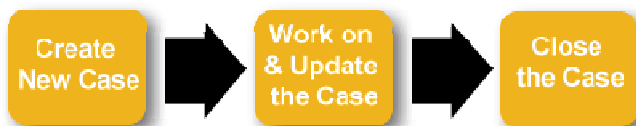
CaseTracker is a project-management tool that allows your squad to create "cases" within "projects" that you can save and work on, online.

Where is it on mousesquad.org?

Go to your Squad Homepage: <http://www.mousesquad.org/squad/my-squad-name>

If you are already logged in to mousesquad.org, you can access CaseTracker on the left sidebar. If you are not logged in, you will see a blank CaseTracker form on this page. You, or anyone at your school, can submit cases to your squad using this form. When you log in, you will be able to manage and edit all cases submitted.

How do I use CaseTracker?



Here is an example of how Casetracker is used:

1. Mrs. Smith lets you know that her computer's mouse is broken.
2. You then click on "Create New Case", which will open up a blank case for you to fill out.

3. Fill out the case form (NOTE: You only need to fill out the fields that are relevant to your case).
 - Project: Select the appropriate Project (only Teachers can add new projects, if they haven't done so, you will only be able to select "General").
 - Assign to: Choose a member of your squad who will be in charge of resolving this case. If you want to do the case yourself, select your own name.
 - Status: "Open" means that the case is not finished, "Closed" means that the problem has been resolved or the task has been completed.
 - Priority: How urgent and important is this case? If it needs to be completed immediately, choose 1, if it is not very important at all, choose 5. Most cases should be no higher than 3 - that way, cases that are "1" or "2" will stand out more.
 - Type: What kind of case is it? Select the most appropriate category.
 - Submitted By: This would be the name of the person who is having the problem. In this case, Mrs. Smith.
 - Title: An easy-to-identify name for your case, try to keep it short.
 - Location: Where is the problem? If Mrs. Smith's computer is in the Library, write "Library".
 - Description: Here is where you fill in everything you know about the case, and any steps you have already taken to resolve it. Be as detailed as you can.
 - Audience: If you are in more than one squad, you will need to select the correct one here.
 - Computer Name/Number, Warranty Number/Exp. Date: If your case relates to a specific computer, you can add its ID & warranty information here, though it is not required.
 - Attachments: You can select a file from your computer to upload to the case - for instance a screenshot of the problem.
4. Submit the case. This will send an email out to whomever you assigned it to.
5. To update your case, as you work on it: click on "View all Cases". Here you will find a list of every case, organized by date. If you don't see your case there, you might click on the "Assigned to" column. This will reorganize the case list by who it is assigned to - clicking on any column header will organize it by that parameter. When you have found your case, click on its title and that will allow you to edit the case with new information. You can do the following to the case, after it is created:
 - Add a new comment.
 - Assign it to another user.
 - Change the priority or type.
6. Change the status to "Closed" only when you have finished working on that case. Don't forget to add a comment describing every step that you took to finished the case.

The Wire, Knowledge Base and Forums

What is the Wire?

The Wire is MOUSE's primary newsletter and communication tool with MOUSE Squad participants across the globe. We will post news about the program, about network-wide competitions (like the DIY project and MOUSE Squad of the Year awards), about updates to the website, etc. All users are required to subscribe to the Wire during registration.

The Knowledge Base

The Knowledge Base (or Kbase) is an encyclopedia of resource articles and multimedia material on MOUSE Squad help desk operations, technical skills, work & life skills, how-tos and screencasts for using mousesquad.org, and the MOUSE Squad Implementation Guide for coordinators.

The MOUSE Squad Forum

The Forum section encourages Squads around the world to connect with each other and with MOUSE by creating and participating in threads written by community members. Both students and coordinators can start conversations here to troubleshoot and brainstorm implementation issues at schools, to ask questions about an event or new website features, etc.